

Anti Poverty Hearing – Part 3

April 10, 1967

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY
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MURPHY: 1144 that were Negroes and 1622 that were White. Is that right?

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: Now, if you add those two figures together, it comes 2,706. I'm merely trying...

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. Those...the others were the ones that we had no follow-up report on.

MURPHY: The rest of them found jobs on their own.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. We did not have any information to follow them up.

MURPHY: How do you choose and by what machinery do you select the people who go into the course?

SIMMONS: Pardon?

MURPHY: How do you choose the people that go into the training?

SIMMONS: They're recruited from the unemployed and underemployed. We have people scattered out all over the state that go out and recruit these people. They're brought in...come in to our offices. We have interviewers and counselors that work with them to try to determine which would be the best route for them to take that would best benefit them either in the various courses that might be available to them or some of the other programs like STAR and...

MURPHY: Is there any proportion that is laid down. In other words, do you, at any time, attempt to make certain that you get at least 30 per cent Negro or 40 per cent?

SIMMONS: No, sir. We do not have...

MURPHY: It's just to your [discrepancy]?

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: In other words, there's no consideration on a racial basis?

SIMMONS: No, sir.

- MURPHY: Now, do you think that the people across the state, possible many that need the training very badly, understand that the facilities are available? The reason I ask this...in my state in California I found that many people who needed help didn't know where they could go to get it or how they could get it, and we had an amendment put in the bill last year to authorize mobile units so these people who, obviously, who haven't got a job or any skill, it's very difficult for them to travel. Has this been considered? The use of mobile units in order to...
- SIMMONS: We do not have mobile units. We have hired in the last year or 14 months a number of what we call community workers that work out in the communities where these pockets of poverty are to tell the people and to bring them in to our facilities to try to help them as much as possible.
- MURPHY: Now, those workers, are they paid for by the state or by the federal...
- SIMMONS: They're paid for through our grants from the federal government to our agency. Yes, sir.
- MURPHY: You're satisfied that this is working much better?
- SIMMONS: It's working much better than it was, Senator Murphy, because, until this time, we had very little information out among the poor, and we think it's improved it, although we're still not reaching all of them.
- MURPHY: Do you happen to recall training any of these people to be household domestics?
- SIMMONS: No, sir, we have not trained any household domestics.
- MURPHY: Is there any need for such?
- SIMMONS: Well, there is job opportunities for household domestics, but, the wage rates, we would not be suitable for training purposes. We don't think it'd be...
- MURPHY: What are the wage rates here?
- SIMMONS: Well, it varies from area to area all over the state, and I really don't know what it would be. I can get some information for you to include in this report.
- MURPHY: There are two things that interest me. The...the supplemental labor situation on the farms which I think, properly administered, could create a great source of earning, because, obviously, many of the people who are out of work are farmers.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir

MURPHY: And they're good farmers.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: And they're good workers.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: I had the experience last year up in the Salinas Valley in California of finding a Negro gentleman who was 60 years of age with one arm picking strawberries, and he made 27 dollars the day before...

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: ...and was he going to make 32 that day, and he hadn't been at it too long. And they're short of workers. They're short of people who cut asparagus. All sort of harvest labor.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

MURPHY: And it's quite a problem. Also, every place I go I hear people say, "Well, I wish I could get a good cook or a good maid." Now, my forefathers, when they came from Ireland, they were known as the best servants that you could get, and they took great pride in [inaudible], and, now, sometimes people say that this is demeaning, that this is downgrading. I don't think it is. I think it's [an evidence of great trust]. And I was just wondering whether this might not be an area where, through a great training program, a [inaudible] of jobs [inaudible] could not be provided.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. I'm sure there could be.

MURPHY: I have no more questions. Thank you very much.

JAVITS: Mr. Chairman, may I ask just one question?

CLARK: Senator Javits.

JAVITS: Now, in the manpower training that you give, do the Whites and Negroes work side by side?

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

JAVITS: They're completely integrated?

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

JAVITS: Have you had any trouble with that?

SIMMONS: No, sir. We have not had one minute's trouble, Senator Javits, with our MDTA program. It's been just wonderful.

JAVITS: Thank you.

CLARK: Senator Kennedy.

KENNEDY: Just...I wonder if...clarify the request of the chairman and, perhaps, supplement it. Could we have the names of the individuals that have been placed in this program and whether they're Whites or Negroes and how much they're making and what their jobs are at the present time? I might say that this is the same request I am going to make in other states and in other areas.

SIMMONS: Would you like the names of the 3,000?

KENNEDY: Yes.

SIMMONS: Well, now, if we will get...we can give you...

KENNEDY: And what their jobs...the ones that you have placed...their jobs now and how much money they're making.

SIMMONS: The ones that we placed, yes, sir. Now, the ones that got their jobs on their own and did not respond to our follow-up information, this infor...we would not have this.

KENNEDY: But you'll give me the information that you have on the...and any information that you have [inaudible]

SIMMONS: Be happy to.

KENNEDY: And then the...also, the...what information you have regarding their race [inaudible]

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. Be happy to.

CLARK: I don't see how you know whether they have gotten jobs or not if they got them not through you, and, yet, you recruited them and a number of people got jobs. How do you explain that?

SIMMONS: Senator Clark, we send follow-up notices.

CLARK: Yeah.

SIMMONS: And they respond to these notices and tell us where they're working and...

CLARK: Whether or not you got them jobs.

SIMMONS: Sir?

CLARK: Whether or not you got them the job.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. Whether or not we got them the job.

CLARK: And, when they respond, they tell you where they are and what they are making and you know whether they're Negro or White.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir.

KENNEDY: Can I ask one more question?

CLARK: Senator Kennedy.

KENNEDY: How many people have entered this program?

SIMMONS: We had 31...3,108 that were enrolled in training. 77.6 per cent completed training. In addition, we have approximately 2,500 currently enrolled in this training.

KENNEDY: Oh, well, then I misunderstood. The 70 per cent finished the training?

SIMMONS: 77.8 per cent completed training.

KENNEDY: And 71 per cent [inaudible]

SIMMONS: 71.9 per cent of those were...secured employment.

CLARK: Which is about half of the ones who entered.

SIMMONS: Yes, sir, I would...my arithmetic's bad, but I imagine that's pretty [inaudible]

CLARK: Senator Murphy.

MURPHY: Have you any idea as to the cost per enrollee?

SIMMONS: Yes, sir. The cost of this fiscal year is a little less than 2,400 dollars.

MURPHY: 4,400 dollars?

SIMMONS: 24.

MURPHY: 24?

SIMMONS: 2,400 dollars.

KENNEDY: Does that include the ones that don't finish?

SIMMONS: This includes the...yes, sir...this includes the total number of enrollees regardless of whether or not they did not finish.

MURPHY: I see. Now I have one other question. You...I don't know whether you were here earlier, but there was some comment about the Nelson Amendment which indicated that there had been some ditches dug that weren't very productive, and I got the feeling that these ditches were dug on private plantations or private farms. Would you care to comment on that?

SIMMONS: The only Nelson Amendment project that was with a drainage district which is, as I understand the drainage district, is an association, and they have right of way through the private property and this is to drain the land and it's a cooperative sort of thing.

MURPHY: I see. Thank you. Thank you very much.

CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr. Simmons. Our next witness is...

[WALES]: We'll return to the subcommittee hearings after pause for station identification.

CLARK: Mrs. Wright, you have...please sit down...you have testified before us in Washington, and, now, you have asked to testify again. We are very happy to afford you that privilege. You know our time problem. Will you please proceed your own way?

WRIGHT: Thank you, Senator. I am happy for the privilege. Now, [inaudible] to come out here today, and I'm not going to concentrate on need. I mainly want to [say] a couple of things...

CLARK: Now, would you just wait a moment, please, because I've been handed three telephone messages which may be quite important. One is for the Reverend Allan Johnson. Another for Mr. J. T. Fontaine. And the third for a Mr. [Aleman]. [inaudible]

[WALES]: We're back to the hearing. At this time, Senator Clark is delivering some phone messages to people in the audience. Now, Mrs. Wright of [inaudible]

WRIGHT: I want to talk about three general things very briefly, Senator, if I may.

CLARK: You're going to need that mic a little more, I think.

WRIGHT: All right. One, what the impact of the poverty program has been in the state. Two, it's function now in the context of the needs that exist and which you've heard described this morning. And, three, some recommendations about what the Congress should do, at least, in trying to protect the participation of poor people in this state and throughout the country. I think that the poverty program has had a major impact in the country is very clear, and particularly here in Mississippi, from the fact that there is so much controversy. I think this controversy does show that change is occurring. [inaudible] it's biggest reflection. Secondly, that it's had a major impact on how people feel about themselves, I think, again, is reflected by this controversy, because, for the first time, poor people are participating. They are making decisions, and they are insisting they be more included in all the decision-making processes of government here. I think the greatest success story that can be told is that the number of communities that [reached] the third largest Head Start program in the state is being run by the poorest people out of their own pockets. Two thousand children in this situation on a volunteer basis shows clearly that these people have been inspired by something to do things for themselves. I think this huge volunteer operation that is going on in the absence of federal funds, which was initiated through the poverty program where they had an atmosphere where they could do and help their children and help themselves, is a great tribute to it. Despite this, I think that we see only 15 per cent of the Negro children who are eligible...the Negro and the White children in the state who are eligible...for Head Start being affected, so, at most, we've made only a scratch in the bucket. And the poverty program has not been at all responsive to the huge needs that you've heard described this morning in terms of the dislocated farm worker. The immediate needs of hunger must be met. Now, what is wrong with the poverty program and how can it be improved? I think you've heard about people's feelings about many of the CAP structures. You've heard them express their desires for independent programs. I see what is going on down here and the change that has come about in stages. I think the need for independent programs has been very strong and continues to be very strong. But, in many instances, we've seen these independent programs as catalytic influences to get those other elements in the community who should be involved in helping to eradicate poverty involved. So, as a response to a lot of independent programs that have started, you have had movement in several communities in the state where you have now formed potentially very good CAP boards. With

continued independent operation where poor people are participating in developing, this can provide the pressure, I think, for other elements of the community to get involved. You see it, but it's coming slowly. On the whole so far, the CAP structures have not been working, mainly because I think it's based on a too simplistic thought that all elements of the community are interested in eradicating poverty. Certain preconditions must exist which do not exist in most of our communities here in the country. We're assuming one community, and we're assuming a commitment by all sectors of that community to the eradication of poverty, and our experience and I think the history of Mississippi defies that. How then, do we get over that? I'll slow down, which is my problem. How do we get over that? One, I think, that OEO's guidelines, which are basically sound, and I think it's objective, which are basically sound, must be implemented. If you're going to talk about community action, you're going to have to ensure the kind of atmosphere where community action can occur and develop. What does this mean? This means that CAP boards must be representative of all elements, and those representatives must be chosen in open elections where people in the community have access to the information. I think that Mr. Simmons' testimony this morning reflects a lot. If you, as Senators, find that it is difficult to get the kind of information of what a major federal agency is doing, you can imagine how difficult it is for the average poor person in the state to find out what the governmental agencies are doing and what programs exist. There must be openness, and the [inaudible] clearly provides this. There must be elections to ensure that those people who are sitting in CAP structures are representative. Now, in terms of how much maximum [inaudible] participation of poor there should be, and we've heard lots of workings on formulas and how much public involvement there should be. In terms of a new proposed legislation and the [inaudible] of the President's poverty message in one [inaudible], there's going to be a great move toward more control by local power structures, and I'm talking about the state and local governments in this context. That would be a major tragedy for a place like Mississippi, where I think we've documented and can document the disparate policies that these state agencies have had toward the Negro and White communities. Our federal programs and our state, local public agencies are not functioning, as they should. They're not in compliance with Title VI, and if any further federal programs are to come to these agencies, they should be with safeguards built in. And, if these state agencies are not going to follow those safeguards and ensure participation by all elements of the community, then the Congress must preserve the right of people to participate in independent programs. Only then, I think, through the development of these independent programs, are you eventually going to move these public institutions toward the posture where they should be.

CLARK:

You mentioned Title VI. You meant Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and not of the Poverty Act, didn't you?

- WRIGHT: Yes. I'm sorry. I should have made that distinction. But you must preserve these independent programs. To send more money or to restrict money for Head Start through local school boards and a shift to the Office of Education or...
- CLARK: Let me ask you this, Mrs. Wright. What happens to the Head Start child when he or she leaves a good Head Start program and moves into the first grade of the Mississippi educational system? That's what disturbs me. That's one of the things [that disturbs me].
- WRIGHT: Well, sir, [inaudible] me, too, Senator, and I think one of the things that is very clear and very crucial is that there be some follow up program. But right now what you have is most of these children coming to a Head Start school becoming more alive, becoming more open, becoming more free, yet, they go home to poverty stricken environments, and they, also, go back to either the segregated Negro school where Mississippi still is [inaudible] in many of our districts, spending much less per pupil on Negro children. And 98 per cent of our Negro children remain in all Negro schools and many of these, or most of these, are substandard. And those few that go up to the White schools, again, are getting a little better education than the majority of their friends in the Negro schools. But, even so, I think the recent studies of the Mississippi Research and Development Institute show that the entire Mississippi educational system is woefully inadequate...
- CLARK: Now, if I understand the testimony here today, it is that the overwhelming majority of the children in these various Head Start programs are in practically totally Negro Head Start programs, so shifting to a Negro school would not be a particular adjustment, would it?
- WRIGHT: Well, we're assuming that in many of our Head Start schools, some of them at least...and this is more, too, I think, in independent operations...that the children are getting something different in the kinds of approaches they got in education when they went into a Negro school in first grade.
- CLARK: Yes, I understand that, but they're still segregated, aren't they?
- WRIGHT: They're still segregated. Now, this is not by choice. This poses certain problems. Again, it goes to the kind of federal backing to implement certain safeguards and ensuring there is going to be desegregation. Secondly, I think that it is very much more difficult to require the Negro community running independent programs, to go out and recruit Whites, and it's going to take a very brave Negro to go out in the rural areas to recruit poor Whites.
- CLARK: It's going to be an unusual White family, too, isn't it, who will send their

child to an all Negro Head Start program?

WRIGHT:

I think that's true, and I think the thing that's encouraged me...and, again, this program's potential is that many White parents have seen the Negro children and Negro parents getting something from this poverty program have wanted to come, have wanted to participate, but, either through pressures from their own community or because they've not been allowed a structure within which they can be involved, they've not been allowed to participate. You heard about the violence this morning. I think that, while the Governor may have changed his policy, this has not drifted through to many of the state highway patrol officials. This has certainly not drifted through to many local officials, and I think Grenada this year reflects that as best as anything. But few things have resulted in some changes and that has been increased federal prosecution of certain major civil rights crimes. But I think all of us are quite aware that the existing statutes protecting people participating in civil rights and just protecting people period from physical violence are not being fully implemented, and we need stronger standards and stronger enforcements, and I would encourage this Congress to take stronger action in this regard for the people who do participate, White and Negro, will be protected. And, if the federal government makes it clear that it is not going to tolerate this and that people will be prosecuted, I think you will have a change of atmosphere and you will have the kind of change of atmosphere where people will feel freer. This gets back to the poor White again, in a sense, that, if you had in the poverty program guidelines, which you do have which you strongly enforced, and leave out so much of the discretion in the sense that you've left through either lack of follow through or lack of evaluation to determine how programs are actually working, if you had clear requirements, this would put the burden on the states or on CAP structures or on independent programs to meet certain standards which they know have to be met and it takes the pressure off of them in the local communities to do as little as they can possible do. I think you are stunting the growth of Mississippi Whites by giving them easy [inaudible] in creating CAP structures as well as stunting the growth of the Negro community. You must define these standards in terms of what is expected based upon the objectives that you want to achieve and implement them. I think that OEO has taken some good approaches in its task force. Whether or not we're going to need one third or one half or more than that representation of the poor in community action boards, I think it's going to depend on the local situation and the kind of follow through evaluation and intensive negotiation that can come about as we've seen through the OEO task force where the few good CAP boards have been created through an intensive community involvement and evaluation by OEO officials making it very clear what can be expected there. Now, finally, in the sense of what has to be done. It does not help the Head Start child very much...

CLARK:

Excuse me, Mrs. Wright.

WRIGHT: All right.

CLARK: If you'll hold it just a minute. Go ahead, please.

WRIGHT: It does not help the child very much, as we've indicated earlier, to go to a Head Start school but to go home and cannot get the food or his family not being able to get jobs or their not knowing about decent health treatment or being allowed to get it. The poverty program has got to begin to concentrate more on the whole family and more on participation of the whole family, and that's the only way in which a child is going to develop. And I hope that stronger programs will be and new programs will be created whereby a greater and more intensive care can be given to the entire family unit. This is the only way that whatever Head Start these children make now is going to develop and sort of get us to something. And, hopefully, through parent involvement you can begin to try to get parents enough interested in the education of their children so they will have an impact on the public school systems as well. Secondly, I can't overemphasize the need for great evaluation by federal agencies of federal programs, and I think Mr. Simmons' testimony is the most eloquent reflection of that than I could give. Thirdly, the participation of the poor must be maintained. I think we've been shown again and again now that once they have seen, as they have in some few programs, that they can run things for themselves with dignity, they will not take less. And they are going to insist that any programs that come involve them, because they now understand that this is the only way in which substantial change is going to take place.

CLARK: Well, now, let me interrupt you there to throw at you a really very difficult question. You heard Senator Stennis testify this morning, and he was about as emphatic as a man could be, that to bypass the elected public officials in this state was, not only ineffective as a pragmatic matter, but as a normal problem of constitutional democracy for the federal government to run around the state and municipal officials elected by the people to be sure with an inadequate franchise was just not in accordance with our American democratic system. You're a graduate of an excellent law school. I know you've studied government and constitutional history. What is your answer, what justification is there for bypassing what you call the power structure in order to give the federal funds to these independent organizations which are either unwilling to or unable to cooperate with the elected public officials of their communities?

WRIGHT: Senator Clark, I'd say, just as a lawyer, there are many constitutional principles, and I think that one of them is that all people in this democracy are to have a chance to participate on an equal basis. This has not been done in this state. I think the state has shown again and again that it will not take care of all of the citizens, as it should. Senator Stennis, I think, has shown

his lack of interest in poverty by voting consistently against the Poverty Act. I don't think he can now come and [inaudible] with other people who are interested in doing something about poverty try to participate. I think that the documentation and the record of Mississippi speaks for itself. The fact that he says that there is no need to bypass the state agencies, I think, is defied by the record in schools by the Employment Security Commission's report, by agricultural [process] as documented by the Civil Rights Commission. We talked about state control. We have to, also, talk about state responsibility, and, until Mississippi gets to the point where it's going to respect the law and respect the rights of all citizens, it has no right to require that all these other citizens who have, themselves, been pushed out from the participatory process, be denied benefits that the federal government owes to the people to make sure that they can maintain their survival. And that, I think, is the issue. When Mississippi gets ready to do its job, I think that we'll be all very, very happy to participate with them, but, until that time, I think the federal government has a clear obligation to people to try to bring them up to the level where they can participate in the process of government and that hasn't come yet. Now, finally, I think that what we need in the Congress is much more of an emphasis, which we have not seen and I've been very disturbed and quite understandable, though, the great emphasis on the northern urban ghetto, which is nothing more than the product of what Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana failed to do itself 40, 30, 20 years ago and continues to fail to do. And there's no place for these people in those northern ghettos left. And I think that we're going to have to begin to deal with the rural problems here by creating jobs and new industries and training with better coordination with existing job opportunities and job opportunities that will open. Now, in terms of the emergency needs, there must be some revision or revision of the OEO...of the agricultural guidelines to permit people to eat. I think there's nothing in that act which requires that they charge people, and I think the testimony here is very clear that, as a result of the food stamp program, that people cannot meet this and are starving. Secondly, I think some of the special impact money that is available in existing [acts] to model cities programs offer great hope in the immediate future, if allowed, for a number of public works jobs which could immediately relieve some of the unemployment and underemployment in the Delta, and I would hope that there will be an increase in these programs in, at least, some southern cities or southern areas which could have some impact on our rural areas surrounding them, will get the benefit of some of these programs.

CLARK: Thank you very much, Mrs. Wright. Senator Javits.

JAVITS: Mrs. Wright, I shall not go over the ground that you have already covered. I noticed that you did not answer anything about Senator Stennis' charges against CDGM. Could you...do you wish to make any comment on that?

WRIGHT: Well, he's wrong, Senator Javits, and we've been through this again and again. I think that...I hate to keep responding to trial by newspaper. CDGM has had three grants. We're in our third grant period. During our first grant period in 1965 after our OEO final audit which we ran an [inaudible] of 1.5 million dollars, the amount disallowed, the amount that OEO said that had been misused, was about 14,000 dollars which was less than 1 per cent of the total grant. And that amount was made good by the Presbyterian Church and we guarantee that not one penny of taxpayer money was lost. I think this is an incredibly good figure which is again almost much beneath the [inaudible]

[Break in tape]

JAVITS: ...of all the programs for [preschool age] children being operated in Mississippi, this to this day is servicing the most children. Isn't that true?

WRIGHT: This to this day is servicing the most children. It was the first and only Head Start that initially began. I think its success has been reflected by that this time when we applied to OEO for our last grant without recruitment, 30,000 children had signed up to participate. And it has been the single largest Head Start, not only in the state, but in the country.

JAVITS: There's no question about the fact that the poor are actually participating in this one?

WRIGHT: The poor control this program, and CDGM, I'd like to reemphasize as some people said this morning, is local communities. The board of CDGM is three-fourths...two-thirds poor, almost completely local, and employees in this program, quite the contrary of Senator Stennis' programs, are 98 per cent local.

JAVITS: Now, could you tell us something about the role which is being played, or could be played, by the private business community in respect of the matter that we've been discussing about employment, training, and education?

WRIGHT: I think the private business community could play a great role if they were willing. I think, in one instance, the poverty program's being in the state has resulted in the private business community getting a little more interested in the problems of the Negro community mainly because they've gotten something out of the poverty program, too. And we've found in those local communities and we, as a deliberate decision, decided initially that we would bank with local county banks throughout the state as well as at a central banking location. These businessmen who could gain from the poverty program began to see that they had something to gain, too, and have become a little more cooperative. Gradually, I think, with increased money, with increased intensiveness by the poor, you're going to see the business

community focus a little more on these issues. Secondly, I think the business community is beginning to understand that it cannot afford more conflict, and, rather than have a lot of conflict, I think they are going to try to begin to work out moderate means. So, in a sense, these independent programs, which many people attacked, have played a very important role in pushing people who ordinarily would not have moved into action. Whether or not the businessmen should be involved, Senator, I think is really depends on their commitment, and I think, in some communities, you may...may be able to. I think, so far, in most communities, we have not been able to. But I think that whether or not that will eventually exist will depend, in large measure, on the effectiveness of the poverty programs.

JAVITS: Now, when you speak of, what you call, the power structure, to what extent does that include the private business community?

WRIGHT: It does include the private business community to a great extent.

JAVITS: What else does it include?

WRIGHT: Well, I think when many people talk about the power structure, they're talking about the private business community. They're talking about the state government. They're talking about the local Board of Supervisors who are the most immediate people in their lives. And, sometimes, they're also talking about the Negro power structure. There are a number of middle class Negroes who formed alliances with White businessmen who are, themselves, helping to block progress. So, it must be looked at in the context. But, generally, when we talk about power structure, we're talking about public officials though everybody sometimes assumes that businessmen, the business structure which has a great impact on how the power...public [inaudible] will act, are sometimes involved in these decisions.

JAVITS: Now, to what extent do you feel that the national business community, the large corporations with national relationships including branches, et cetera, the associations like the NAM or the Chamber of Commerce and others. To what extent can they influence the situation?

WRIGHT: They could be very involved. I think that, on the whole, their pressure has been almost nonexistent and, where existent, pretty inadequate. I think the northern business with branches down in Mississippi have held up double standards of employment. I think that if the central businesses throughout the country...and Mississippi is owned by the North and I think that is something that should be pointed out. While we hit Mississippi industry, Mississippi industry is really in New York and elsewhere. And we did a survey. Most of the industry is northern controlled, yet, they've done absolutely nothing to help eradicate the discriminatory employment

practices. And, as far as we know, there's been no major move or policy statement or major action or systematic approach by any of the business associations of a national scale to really see that compliance with Title VI occurs. Much more needs to be done on this. And Title VI, which is inadequate in many ways because of its weak enforcement procedures, has not begun to have a dent on the whole employment situation so that even those jobs that do exist are not getting down to people because of racial discrimination.

JAVITS: Well, now, is it a fact that you say that most of the business in the state is segregated in hiring, et cetera?

WRIGHT: I think, as a general proposition, yes.

JAVITS: It still remains so?

WRIGHT: It still remains so, and I think that one of the things required is, again, stronger federal legislation, because Title VI, as it now works, is not workable. And, I know, from Mississippi, we sent in about 300 complaints to EEOC, most of whom were not processed or we haven't gotten responses on them yet, and that was a year and a half ago. And even those complaints that were processed were referred back to us for litigation. The conciliatory procedures simply aren't adequate to deal with the kind of business resistance that you have, and there must be very strong enforcement proceedings written into that act which don't now exist.

JAVITS: The last question I'd like to ask you, Mrs. Wright, is this. To what extent is the...is there any connection between a...a...a working CAP that really has participation of the poor, etcetera, and the extent of Negro voter registration in a particular area?

WRIGHT: I think there is, Senator. I think in those areas where we have now our best CAP boards you, also, have a majority, or a very quick potential majority, of Negro voters. In Bolivar County, where Mr. Moore comes from, there are now 2,000 more Negroes registered than Whites, and you have much more cooperation all of a sudden from the White public and business officials. In southwest Mississippi, where Mr. Evers is involved where there is a very strong registration drive, you find a much more workable CAP board. I think that one is seeing a responsiveness on the part of the White community in direct relation. I disagree with Mr. Dean's statements to the growth...to the amount of political strength which raises an issue, because it's very, very complex here. Because I know I have talked with OEO officials in terms of the kinds of CAP structures that I think are required, and because there is a great deal of relationship between poverty, money and who does control the voter, whether or not people will vote. And I know that, in many instances, I got responses that, when you do get the

vote, you come back and we'll be able to help you. And while we're saying, at the same time, we cannot get the vote if the people who are controlling the money are allowed to maintain control over these people in order to free people so that they will be free to participate in the political processes and to get enough dignity where they understand the importance of that, they must be given a chance to develop. And it seems to me this is a peculiar role of OEO here. The poverty program is the last hope, in a way, for these people beginning to assert themselves. It's been the one thing they've had to grasp upon. It's shown them they can do. And to, then, stunt their growth by pulling in a structure that's going to keep them from voting because they're going to be afraid of losing their jobs or they're going to be afraid of their children getting thrown out of that school [inaudible] and they're going to be afraid of the people who do control many of the CAP boards, is a major mistake in terms of the immediate and long range development, I think, and the benefits that will flow to Mississippi, itself, by having all of its citizens participate, the poverty program can play a large, large role.

JAVITS: Right. Do I understand that last point to be your argument against the President's recommendation...

WRIGHT: Very much so.

JAVITS: ...that more public officials be put on CAP boards?

WRIGHT: I don't think that more public officials should be put on CAP boards, because public officials in the past and even now are not doing their jobs properly. And, if they are to be put on them, there should be very specific conditions that they must meet in order to participate.

CLARK: Do you yield?

JAVITS: [I do.]

CLARK: You're confining your comments to Mississippi, are you not?

WRIGHT: Yes. Some of them are more generally applicable, though.

JAVITS: But, in the last statement, that related to Mississippi?

WRIGHT: Yes, sir.

JAVITS: Thank you. Thank you [inaudible]

CLARK: Senator Kennedy.

KENNEDY: Could you tell...talk a little bit more about what the situation is in the Delta

and the needs there? And, also, would you comment a little bit on the school...the stamp program, the food stamp program?

WRIGHT: Yes, sir. One of the problems, I think, that all of us have is that we know so little about the dimensions of it. Mrs. Blackwell, last night in talking with me late, was saying that 28 per cent, she would estimate, of her people have left Issaquena County in the last six or seven months because of nothing to do. The hunger is great. In the Delta alone, according to statistics that I saw printed.

KENNEDY: Are you going...will you talk a little slower?

WRIGHT: Yes, sir.

KENNEDY: All right.

WRIGHT: In the Delta Democratic Times, 75 per cent of the Negro and White citizens in the Mississippi Delta fall beneath the poverty level. In Mr. Moore's county, according to statistics, he gave me last night which he submitted to OEO, about 3600 families fall beneath 1000 dollars a year and this involves a lot of people. Now, all I know is, and I can submit to this committee, that we have had more complaints and more discussion and more pressure in the last six months about hunger than we ever have had. And I've been...so far I think that we've been seeing the surplus commodities at least sort of gotten people...they got people through last winter. With the change to food stamps, one has seen several things. One has seen a great number of people saying we simply cannot eat.

KENNEDY: Now will you just explain what the difference...how the difference is brought about by the food stamp program?

WRIGHT: Well, the difference that was brought about was, one, surplus commodities were free. At least, they could go down to the welfare commodity office and get some food that, while not adequate, would at least keep them alive. Food stamps cost money. People with no income can't pay money. Or people with inadequate welfare benefits which Mississippi provides, and it only gives them 31 per cent of need, and an average family with four children in Mississippi makes...gets an average payment of about 50 dollars a month, cannot afford to meet the standards that have been set up...the guidelines that have been set up by agriculture to buy food stamps.

CLARK: Can you give a little bit more specific information as to how much those food stamps cost? I know, of course, that you can get food stamps which, in turn, enable you to purchase certain food stuffs at considerably less than the market price, but I don't know how much, do you?

- WRIGHT: I have...I really apologize. I have that data available in terms of the scale. The minimum payment is two dollars. And that's where we get the person with no income, or just, I guess, no income. And it goes up in relationship to...
- CLARK: But in any event whatever the cost is these unemployed people don't have it.
- WRIGHT: Let's take the minimum amount it costs. Let's take the two dollar figure which is the base figure that's being...at least, that exists in my guidelines...
- KENNEDY: I have the figures here. [inaudible] monthly income of less than 10 dollars, purchase requirements two dollars, and the bonus coupons is 10 dollars. Monthly income between 40 dollars and 50 dollars, the purchase requirement is 10 dollars and the bonus coupons are eight dollars. And a monthly income of 70 dollars to 90 dollars, the purchase requirement is 16 dollars and the bonus coupons is six dollars. That's for one person. For a four person family less than 30 dollars monthly income, purchase requirement is eight dollars, the bonus income...coupons is 40 dollars. Less than 40 dollars...between 40 dollars and 50 dollars, the purchase requirement is 18 dollars and the bonus coupons are 38 dollars, and between 90 dollars and 109 dollars...and 110 dollars, rather...for a four person family the purchase requirement is 40 dollars and the bonus coupons is 30 dollars. Did you understand that?
- WRIGHT: Well, sort of.
- CLARK: I'm not sure I do. I wonder if Senator Kennedy...
- WRIGHT: It doesn't make sense. It seems that...I've tried to get some explanation of how these guidelines are brought up, and they've been, on the whole, fairly arbitrary, and they aren't realistic in terms of the need here.
- CLARK: I'm going to state for the record what I think it means, and I'm going to ask the staff to check to see if this is right. If you have a very low income, you have to put up two dollars for stamps, and you get groceries worth 10 dollars.
- KENNEDY: 12 dollars. Purchase requirement, two dollars and, then, I think you get plus the...
- CLARK: 12 dollars. And, then, if you...that's for a single person. Now, you get down to a four person family, and, if you're in the category of 30 dollars per month or less income, if you put up eight dollars with the stamps, you get

groceries worth 48 dollars. That's what I think it means, but, if it doesn't, I hope the staff will correct me.

JAVITS: Will the senator yield for just one clarification? It is a fact, Mrs. Wright, is it not, that a county that starts the food stamp business doesn't give the surplus food distribution free? Am I right?

WRIGHT: That is correct.

JAVITS: Now, is there any feeling here that this has happened in counties which...because they wish to pursue a policy, an economic boycott policy, have switched to food stamps in order to boycott the very Negroes that needed it the most? Or Whites?

WRIGHT: That's right, Senator Javits. And many people do feel, too, that it's a part of an overall state policy to not respond to the overwhelming need in the Delta in order to force these Negroes out, because they don't want them here.

JAVITS: Hence the recommendation that they should be able to deal with the United States in a...in a real hunger situation.

WRIGHT: Yes, sir.

JAVITS: Thank you. Thank you.

WRIGHT: Senator Kennedy, I've now gotten, I guess, the figures that you may have, but, just putting it in the context of the need that does exist, if you even take the base figure here of two dollars, for a person with no income, that's tantamount to 1,000 dollars. They cannot pay for those. And, even for persons on welfare who may have the stated incomes in this scale, let's assume they are a family of four and they have to contribute...assuming they are a family of eight with an income of 30 dollars a month, and they must contribute 12 dollars toward food stamps, which would benefit them by 62 dollars...or 60 dollars. If they have a welfare benefit of 50 dollars or 60 dollars, which is about the average payment, and, maximally, a mother even with 12 children could only get 90 dollars in Mississippi, she's got to pay rent and water and light and keep her children in school and keep them clothed, she does not have enough left over for that 12 dollars to buy those food stamps. The standards are out of line to the kind of need that is presented. And, when we talk about those people who are not on welfare and who are underemployed, they, again, too, can't meet, and I think that some of these figures that have been com...have been computed by the Civil Rights Commission has shown that there has been a drastic drop. Whereas, last year, according to an Agriculture Department survey, one out of four Mississippians were on surplus commodities, which is a pretty horrible figure, about 445,000 people. There's been a drastic drop in the

number of participants who did get food commodities and those who are now getting food stamps. Just to give you an example. In Jones County, participation dropped from food surplus program or the food commodities, which were free. In March of 1965, we had 17,500 people getting food commodities. Now, in terms of those people who are getting food stamps, only 4,700 are able to get them or are getting them for a decrease of almost 13,000 people. In Harrison County...

KENNEDY: And what is...and what's the reason for that?

WRIGHT: We think...we think...I think there may be several reasons...I think that many of this reflects the number of people who are unable to meet the financial criteria set up in the guidelines.

KENNEDY: The financial criteria meaning that...

WRIGHT: Pay for it.

KENNEDY: The fact that you have to pay two dollars or eight dollars or 10 dollars?

WRIGHT: Yes, sir.

KENNEDY: And you just don't have that kind of income.

WRIGHT: They just don't have the kind of income that would allow them to...

KENNEDY: Did you want to put some other figures? I didn't mean to interrupt you. Go ahead.

WRIGHT: Well, I was just going to give you several other counties. In Harrison County, which is on the gulf coast and is a, relatively, rich county, in the context of...

CLARK: Mrs. Wright, why don't you file that for the record?

WRIGHT: I'll be happy to, Senator.

CLARK: I think you've made your point. We'd like to have it in the record.

WRIGHT: I'll be happy to.

CLARK: Thank you. Senator Murphy.

KENNEDY: I haven't finished.

CLARK: Oh, I'm sorry.

MURPHY: Mrs. Wright, I think that...

CLARK: Wait a minute, George. Bob's not through.

KENNEDY: Could you....part of this...a problem that is related to the question of welfare...could you discuss that for a moment, also?

WRIGHT: Welfare practices, Senator, in Mississippi are terrible. I think we've been able to document, and this committee does have in its report a welfare report that we did, which shows, I think, the violation of federal and state law in hearing procedures, and we've found that most people in Mississippi didn't know they had a right to a hearing. And the failure of the Welfare Department, consistently, to take applications from people and people get terrible runarounds, and we've been able to document this in county after county after county. People are not treated with dignity when they go in the welfare office. They are not allowed to be people and they are investigated and they are threatened and this is a terrible kind of thing that has to be stopped. People who participated in civil rights have been cut off from welfare, and we've been able to document this in many counties. On the whole, the welfare department is simply not functioning to serve the needs of the poor and, particularly, the Negro community. Secondly, even if the Welfare Department did function up to par, which it is not, only 31 per cent is given of need, and you simply cannot live on that amount of money. And Mississippi is refusing to put up the matching share, which makes us lose millions of dollars in potential welfare funds a year. I think one of the things, perhaps, that ought to be thought about is to get some kind of way where welfare departments, such as Mississippi, is not meeting the total federal standard of what...is not putting up the matching share...to see if we can't get some provision in federal law whereby, maybe, 100 per cent will be given to people in situations of need like this where the state refuses to make...to fulfill its obligation. The other kind of thing that does exist is the turn down by the welfare program of programs that could have some impact in the Delta problem now, such as the emergency relief thing and the father would be allowed to remain in the home. But Mississippi, so far, has refused to put up the matching share. It seems to me, either through private foundations or through some special federal provisions, that, when a state agency refuses to accept money in this context, that alternative means have to be worked out. I think this is what I'm trying to say in the poverty program. But, consistently, we've found discrimination ripe throughout the county welfare department on the basis of race, and, even when they do work, they are terribly inadequate because of the 31 per cent limit of need that Mississippi applies.

KENNEDY: So there...the reasons that you described...

[Break in tape]

- KENNEDY: ...well, first, there is widespread hunger and malnutrition, as I understand it, throughout these areas of the state, and for the reasons that you've described, there's really not the kind of progress that needs to be made to deal with the problem.
- WRIGHT: It is not, and I think that's the central point that ought to be made that, so far, the poverty program has done nothing to change the basic economic structure which has to be changed or to really deal with the root problem that is causing poverty.
- KENNEDY: And do I understand that really, for many of these families, it's a question, really, of starvation or of trying to leave and go to some other part of the country?
- WRIGHT: They're starving. They're starving, and those who can get the bus fare to go north are trying to go north. But there's absolutely nothing for them to do. There's no where to go, and somebody must begin to respond to them. I wish that [senators] would have a chance to go and just look at the empty cupboards in the Delta and the number of people who are going around begging just to feed their children. Starvation is a major, major problem now.
- KENNEDY: I think, of course, Mr. Chairman, that this is a reflection on all of us in the country of 1967 and the most prosperous country in the world where the gross national product is 700 billion dollars, where a number of our corporations are making profits greater than 70 of the countries of the world that we would think that all of us would be able to provide for some of our citizens living in this part of the country. As some of this testimony, Mr. Chairman, is a reflection on some of the programs and, I suppose, some of the officials here in the state and that there might be an answer, I think it would be, perhaps, helpful if we, at least, made it possible for any of those public officials who have the responsibility either for the food stamp program or for the welfare program or for any of these others programs that have been discussed here to appear before the committee, and, perhaps, and give their version of these events and facts so that the committee will have all of the information possible.
- CLARK: It would seem to me that one of the first things the subcommittee should do when we get back to Washington is to place the facts which have been developed this afternoon about hunger in Mississippi, the inadequacy of the food stamp program, the totally inadequate diet in those areas where food is being given away, before the Department of Agriculture and insist on a prompt answer as to what could be done about it. I would hope something could be done administratively. If not, I would hope that the subcommittee

would join in a round robin letter, and I would hope it would be unanimous and bipartisan whereby we could break through the crust of bureaucracy and the Department of Agriculture and get something done to feed these hungry people. Senator Murphy.

KENNEDY: May I mention, also, about the fact that if any of the officials from the state wanted to appear before the committee...

CLARK: Oh, yes. We'd, of course, be happy to have any state officials appear before us.

JAVITS: I'd like to state for the record that I'll join with the chair in that

CLARK: Senator Murphy.

MURPHY: Well, I am glad that the chair mentioned that; however, it occurs to me that, if people are starving, I don't think that the procedure is to go to the Department of Agriculture. I think that more drastic means are needed, and I would, respectfully, suggest that this committee notify the President of the United States that there is an emergency situation and send investigators and help in immediately.

CLARK: I would be receptive to that.

MURPHY: I think if we have found out nothing else about the conditions. I didn't know that we were going to be dealing with the situation of starving people, starving youngsters. I didn't know that there were many problems with regard to jobs. I still think that this is one of the major, one of the major problems that has to be fixed. You can talk all you want about training someone for a job, but, if there's no job there, you've wasted a great deal of his time. You've created a false hope, and, maybe, it will do more damage in the long run. Now, first of all, Mrs. Wright, I don't know exactly whether you are a freelance lawyer or who you represent, and would you tell me just for the...all I know is that you were...

WRIGHT: I am a member of the Mississippi Bar.

MURPHY: Yes.

WRIGHT: Though I do...I am primarily engaged in civil rights law for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

MURPHY: I see. Are you connected with the CDGM?

WRIGHT: I am counsel for the CDGM. Yes, I am.

MURPHY: You're their counsel, too. I see.

CLARK: Senator Murphy, would you [inaudible]. The young lady is a graduate of Yale.

MURPHY: Oh, I know that. We [inaudible] last night. No, I was a dropout. I never graduated.

WRIGHT: I'd just like to just make...I'm going to...I've taken too much of the committee's time. One or two other things [inaudible] which may have potentially dangerous implications for us here is the matching share provision. So far, we've been required to pay 10 per cent. The independent programs have been required to put up 10 per cent local share. We have seen that we've been able to meet this with some difficulty, but, in general, I think that the volunteer response on the part of communities has been able to meet this 10 per cent. If this federal share goes up to 20 per cent or higher, or if there is a tremendous amount of discretion to shift the amount of nonfederal share that must be made, the inevitable result of this is to force those independent programs which cannot put up that 10 or 20 per cent or anything in excess of 20 per cent out of business and to have to have more local involvement of public officials which may not be the best thing in that particular instance. I would urge that the nonfederal share, at least in independent programs or in CAP programs in communities where they are extremely poor, not be lifted, because this is going to hurt a great deal. The last thing that I would just urge [inaudible], Senators, is that the Congress take a strong stance in supporting stronger poverty legislation, a much higher level of funding with liberal guidelines such as do exist and with a clear mandate to OEO and to Mr. Shriver so that they can know that they can act in trying to achieve the objectives of Economic Opportunity Act. You must preserve the right of the people to participate, because only through that kind of motivation and self help are you going to get any kind of lasting change. [Else], the poverty program, and unless this kind of participation is protected, is going to turn into just another form of welfarism which is going to just completely build in a horrible situation where we're going to reap terrible results, because, I think, each of us now has to ask ourselves, unless our institutions begin to respond to people, how long can we expect these people to continue to respond to them? And what would you or I do if we had eight children, and we could not feed them, what kind of action would we take? It's in this context, in terms of federal responsibility to take care of its citizens, the Congress must act. The poverty program has been a good start, but it must be strengthened. Community action must be strengthened, and the individual right of the poor community to participate as much as they are able to and get the job done must be preserved. And I thank the committee.

MURPHY: Mrs. Wright, I'm not finished. If you please, I haven't finished.

JAVITS: Senator, you have just one point, and I have to go, and I'd like to ask the senator to yield to me for one point. I think the points that have been made are excellent about the Department of Agriculture and appealing to the President on a disaster relief basis, but these take factual backing. Could you undertake, Mrs. Wright...

WRIGHT: I have factual backing.

JAVITS: ...to help the subcommittee by giving us a prompt memorandum as to the factual backing of the general assertions which have been made?

WRIGHT: I have those, Senator.

JAVITS: I think we're unanimous in the feeling that we've got to move to the most prompt source of action, but you must give us the factual basis.

WRIGHT: Senator, I have that, and I have hundreds of supporting affidavits which show...

CLARK: Not only that. She gave us a lot of it when you testified in Washington three or four weeks ago.

WRIGHT: Yes, sir, I did. But I have it, and I will supply it to the committee immediately for action to be taken, and I concur in Senator Murphy's recommendation that you do do something right now.

CLARK: We're going up into the Delta tomorrow, and I imagine we'll have an opportunity to see some things by eye as opposed to just by ear.

WRIGHT: I hope so.

CLARK: Senator Murphy.

MURPHY: You spoke of the neglect by the northern businessmen, Mrs. Wright, of their obligation. Do you know of the situation that has pertained in the Watts area of Los Angeles and the job that's been done by the McClellan committee?

WRIGHT: Vaguely, Mr. Murphy. I've...I've...I've...

MURPHY: I would suggest that, if I may, I'd like to send you reports of what they have done, of what they've accomplished, because I [have bored] the members of the subcommittee. I'm so proud about what's happened. And it's simply this. A good, sensible, civic-minded, very successful businessman who's retired got interested. And he went to work on a practical basis. And he has supplied 17,500 plus jobs for the people in Watts. And I'm pleased to say

that, after almost a year, over 30 per cent of those people are still employed. They have a very high rate of staying on the job. I would think that, maybe, a plan of this kind might be suggested properly to some of the leaders of the business community here, and I think that, after examination, they'd find it wasn't too complicated. It might be very productive.

WRIGHT: I would hope that one could get the kind of business response in a place like Mississippi that you've gotten in Watts I think we're all clear that the business community could have a major impact on change in the state.

MURPHY: We're so happy about what Mr. McClellan did in Los Angeles...

WRIGHT: Send him down here.

MURPHY: ...that the new governor has now put him in charge statewide, and, if it works statewide, I'm going to see if we can't get him to go nationwide, because he's accomplished more with less expenditure of taxpayer's dollars than anything I know of.

WRIGHT: I think it's good...

MURPHY: I recommend it to you, and I'll send you the report.

WRIGHT: I'll be happy to receive that, Senator.

CLARK: Thank you very much, Mrs. Wright.

[WALES]: We'll return to the subcommittee hearings in just a moment.

CLARK: ...Morris of Jackson, Mississippi, representing the Poor People's Corporation. Is Mr. Morris here? No Mr. Morris? Well, alright, our final witnesses are a panel of community action officials: Mr. George McClain of Tupelo, who is Chairman of Lift, Incorporated; Mr. Robert Rex McRaney of Charleston, who is Executive Director of the Midstate Opportunities, Incorporated; and Mr. Paul Roblin of Columbia, who is Executive Director of the Pearl River Valley Opportunity, Inc. Will those gentlemen please come forward? Gentlemen, I have been handed statements by Mr. Roblin for the Pearl River Valley Opportunities, Incorporated and Mr. McRaney of Midstate Opportunities. Mr. McClain, do you have a statement?

McCLAIN: Yes, sir. It's in the box on the table. I gave it to your secretary.

CLARK: Fine. Now, who is the fourth gentleman?

McCLAIN: Mr. McDaniel, who is Director of the Lift, Incorporated, Executive Director.

I brought him. I'm the Chairman...

[WALES]: Now we're back to the committee hearings. We have on the witness stand now Mr. George McClain of Tupelo and [inaudible], Chairman of Lift, Incorporated. Then Mr. Robert Rex Maraney...McRaney of Charleston, Mississippi, Executive Director of Midstate Opportunities, and Mr. Paul Roblin of Columbia who's Executive Director of the Pearl River Valley Opportunity. Now, Senator Clark.

CLARK: ...each of you have rather elaborate statements here which we're very happy to receive and which will be printed in the record in full at this point. It is now a quarter 'til five. We've been at it all day, and I would beseech each of you in turn to attempt to summarize and not to read your statements. And suppose we start off by giving you each five minutes and see where we get. And let's start on my right, your left with Mr. Roblin.

ROBLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CLARK: We have...May we have quiet, please?

ROBLIN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, distinguished senators. In trying to be brief in paraphrasing the report which you have, I would like to take this opportunity to read the first part, which deals with the Economic Opportunity Act and the Office of Economic Opportunity with some additional information. In your letter, you asked us to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the act, and, in attempting to do this as they apply to Mississippi and our local community, I believe very strongly that the Office of Economic Opportunity would be able to accomplish the manifold objectives which Congress intended in passing this act much more effectively if federal, state and local agencies would coordinate their efforts more realistically. It appears to me that there's been a great deal of conversation from the federal level of employment, manpower, and poverty agencies concerning interagency coordination; however, in the year and a half which I've been working in community action, I've seen very little, especially by the time suggestions and memorandums reach the local area. I feel that Congress could lend invaluable assistance in attaining some of the objectives which they have set forth by requiring all federal agencies dealing with employment, manpower and poverty to effectively coordinate their activities. And I would point in reference to the Economic Opportunity Act and Congress, in its wisdom, including sections 211...

CLARK: Will you just stop a moment? Please observe silence back there. You've been so good all day. Now, just hang on a little longer. If you can't...can't wait, just go outside to talk. We really must hear these witnesses up here on the [inaudible]. Please proceed, Mr. Roblin.

- ROBLIN: In sections 211 and 612 of the Economic Opportunity Act, there is pointed or there are mandates by Congress to federal agencies to give priorities to those programs which are cooperating with community action. It's been my experience that the mandates by Congress are not strong enough, particularly, in dealing with the agencies as they have filtered down to the state and local level. I point, also, to the amendments to the Elementary Secondary Education Act, Title I, of last year, which changed the language of the act essentially weakening the mandate for coordination. If the Head Start program that we're interested in all over the state is to be effective at all, I feel that these efforts must be coordinated with the Elementary Secondary Education Act, and I, personally, would like to see these funds spent for things other than movie projectors and reading equipment which is not being used, band instruments, remodeling of lunchrooms, and these are specific areas which I am familiar with. And I feel very strongly that Congress should put strong language in this mandate of coordination of federal agencies and it should be strong down through the state and the local areas. In the particular case, again, of the Elementary Secondary Education Act, it's interesting to point that the final project approval authority lies within the...or rests with the State Department of Education, and the regional office or the national office really has no say over what's been going on. And our board of directors and our people in our three-county area have become very concerned when we're spending all of this money that they're talking about in trying to deal with these children, and the public school systems obtain 160,000 dollars and spend 20,000 dollars of it to remodel a lunchroom to serve the entire school system. Certainly, the lunchroom needed remodeling, but there were other more critical areas that these children needed.
- CLARK: Mr. Roblin, tell us a little bit about the Pearl Valley...Pearl River Valley. What part of Mississippi is it in and what are...what is the economic base and how did you get to be in the community action program as executive director?
- ROBLIN: We are involved in Marion, Lamar and Walthall Counties which border Louisiana in southwest Mississippi. I became involved in community action about a year and a half ago with a long story which I won't go into it today...
- CLARK: [Just tell us about] what you were doing before that.
- ROBLIN: I have...was a musician and in private business for five years in the music business and went into community action from there. I've done quite a bit of work in mission work through the church.
- CLARK: Are you a native Mississippian?

ROBLIN: Well, I have been since 11. I was born in Canada. I'm a naturalized citizen of this country.

CLARK: And how was your community action group organized?

ROBLIN: It was organized initially by the power structure of the community, and, in conversations and in dealings with the Atlanta regional office as to the CAP guide and the requirements therein, there were elections held within all three communities, and, gradually, we have developed a real voice of the people. We did have a CDGM operation in one of the counties which is now operating within our structure. And I pointed out in my report to you that we have developed something to implement what we think is the voice of the people in the Head Start program, and we contract with community committees, not with a delegate agency, but with each individual community. We have 13 centers, and each center has a committee which is elected by the people. This committee and I would point, again, to this...to my complete statement to you. In the back there is an example of this agreement, which is signed by the local child development or neighborhood committee and the Pearl River Valley Opportunity.

CLARK: Now, in your three-county area, very roughly, what is the percentage of Negroes and Whites?

ROBLIN: There's a large variance in counties. One county is 46 per cent, one county is 35 per cent, and one county is 13 per cent. And it's averaged around 37 per cent Negro population.

CLARK: And what are the OEO...what are the poverty programs which are being operated by your community action groups?

ROBLIN: We have, of course as I mentioned, a Head Start program. We have a neighborhood youth corps program, and this is something that I pointed to, again, in my statement, the fact that the bureau of work programs in Atlanta has recently given us approval to contract with the University of Southern Mississippi to provide the education for these high school dropouts. This is a particular project that we've been real enthused about, because they're using highly qualified professional people to conduct this education. Their...they...it's a challenge to them, to the university, and we have been real inspired in our area to find a university in Mississippi that's interested in using its resources to help solve the problems of the poor. They are, also, if I may mention, they are, also, providing all of the psychological tests for the Head Start children at no cost to us, and they are helping to prepare an in-service training curriculum for the teachers and teachers' aids who are in our program, and we have set up an in-service program where they are trained continually six hours per week in addition to the teaching.

- CLARK: Are the three counties in which you operate, in relative terms with respect to other Mississippi counties, relatively more prosperous? I mean, do you have any hunger out there? We've heard a lot about hunger today.
- ROBLIN: I beg your pardon. I didn't...
- CLARK: I said we've heard a lot about hunger today. Do you have hungry people in those three counties?
- ROBLIN: Yes, sir. We do, and, in particularly, Walthall County. Walthall County is, by far, the poorest of the three counties.
- CLARK: Do you have a problem with the food stamps against the give away of food out there?
- ROBLIN: Two of the counties, Marion and Lamar, have gone to food stamps. Walthall County is still operating, and it seems to me as they will continue to operate surplus food which seems to be, at least, meeting some need at the present time.
- CLARK: Now, would you give us a very brief appraisal of your opinion of the successes and failures of the...of the poverty programs in your area, and just recap briefly, if you will, your recommendations as to what should be done? I have the one about greater coordination. What else?
- ROBLIN: I would emphasize something that was mentioned by, I think, the last witness, the fact that I would recommend that Congress would focus a great deal of attention immediately on the needs of the poor in the rural areas. I did mention in this report that I grant the fact there are immense ghettos in the city, but there's, also, a very disturbing psychological ghetto without the...throughout the rural area of America and, particularly, in Mississippi. And this psychological ghetto is just as depressing and is just as demoralizing and is just as critical as the ghettos in the city. And, as mentioned previously, if the cities...the cities will never solve their problems until something is done to stop the constant migration of uneducated people and unskilled labor.
- CLARK: Now, how are you going to stop that? That's puzzled me all afternoon. They say they're hungry. They can't get jobs. They can't get health services. There's nothing for them here. This is not only true of Mississippi. It seems to be true of great other sections in the South, and, perhaps, elsewhere in the United States. It's what's happening all over Latin America. I know, myself, from my experience in Pennsylvania with the Area Redevelopment Act going back ten years or so, the unemployment in those days in the [hard and soft coal] regions was enormous. And we did everything we could to bring industry in there. We succeeded to some

extent, but those in the poverty-stricken counties have been, to some extent, depopulated, and the drift to the cities continues. How can you stop it?

ROBLIN: Of course, Senator, if I had the answer to that question, I'd be a brilliant man, but I would say this.

CLARK: If we had the answer, we wouldn't be here.

ROBLIN: Right. I would say this that we have attempted to do several things in our particular area. We have attempted to implement the small business economic opportunity loan, and we have pending now, I think, three applications of local indigent people who are going into private enterprise in an initial venture who are among the poverty-stricken. We, also, have a particular business which is applying for a small business 502 loan which will employ 30 indigent people.

CLARK: Well, I took you off the track, and we are pressed for time. Suppose you just give us a little capsule of your appraisal of how good your programs are.

ROBLIN: Well, I would like to go to one particular item in here, if I may, and that is the philosophy of our agency as we see it, as I see it, as our board sees it, and, I hope, as our community sees it. I hope that we get a true picture from our community. We, basically, feel that it's twofold. First of all, we believe that it should be...we should create and maintain a high degree of professionalism within the structure of our organization, so that we can better help poor people become truly participating citizens. We have recently undergone a program management analysis to analyze the management procedures being used by the Pearl River Valley and to suggest improved business practices, procedures and methods with a view of producing a more economical improved operation. And I might add, specifically, that we have, through this study if it's approved with OEO and the regional office, reduced the transportation costs of children in Head Start by some 20,000 dollars a year. Secondly, we feel that the basic objective of community action is to provide a means to help people help themselves. And I go into some examples. One area that we are working with the Farmers' Home Administration with no additional funds from OEO is in a self help housing project which we have initiated with six families on an experimental basis and two of our staffs...two of our staff personnel and two members from the Farmers' Home Administration will be supervising the construction of these buildings.

CLARK: Thank you very much, Mr. Roblin. We will attempt to study your statements in considerable length. I notice you, also, have a little pamphlet here called, 'A Narrative Evaluation of Our Summer Head Start Project' which will be printed in the record. I now ask Mr. McClain to take...

ROBLIN: Mr. Chairman, if I may just say this. I did intend to say that I have a copy...three copies that are available to this committee, if they would like them, of the program management analysis done of our area.

CLARK: We'd like very much to have that filed with the record.

ROBLIN: Ok.

CLARK: [inaudible]. Thank you very much. Mr. McClain.

KENNEDY: Would you take the microphone over?

???: Mr. McRaney's? Is that the one?

CLARK: Yeah. Oh, this is Mr. McRaney, isn't it?

McRANEY: Yes, sir.

CLARK: Well, that's all right. You go ahead.

McRANEY: Senator Clark, I think I can speak for the people of Mississippi when I say we welcome you here today, and we appreciate you holding these hearings here. We, also, appreciate Senator Kennedy, Senator Murphy and Senator Javits in coming here and trying to learn of our problems.

CLARK: Thank you very much.

McRANEY: I would like to take just a minute to tell you about the area in which I represent or of which I work in. I work, primarily, in the Delta region of Mississippi, a five county area consisting of 2,000 square miles and more than 109,000 people. During...between 1950 and 1960, we lost some 9,000 people from these five counties that migrated to other sections. The average educational attainment of the people in these five counties is a little more than six grades, and the per capita income is a little more than 600 dollars.

CLARK: Now, that's cotton country, isn't it?

McRANEY: Yes, sir. It's very much cotton country and soybean country. So, with the educational attainment and the per capita income, you can see that we have a tremendous problem in the Delta region of our state and country in providing some type of work and training programs to just keep these people alive until they can become better adjusted to the change in mechanization of the farms there.

KENNEDY: Could you just break that figure? How many people live there now?

- McRANEY: A hundred...a little more than 109,000.
- KENNEDY: 109? [inaudible] And how many of those are Negro and how many are White?
- McRANEY: I can tell you in just one minute, sir. 62 per cent are Negroes, 38 per cent are White.
- KENNEDY: And, when you talk about the average schooling of a little over the sixth grade, have you got that broken down into White and Negro?
- McRANEY: Now, this is for all the people.
- KENNEDY: Yes, I understood that.
- McRANEY: The Negro population, on the average, would drop two grades.
- KENNEDY: So, that's about fourth grade?
- McRANEY: Right, sir.
- KENNEDY: And the White population's what? Maybe...
- McRANEY: Approximately seventh or eighth grade.
- CLARK: Now, you talk of the ex-migration. That's still continuing, isn't it?
- McRANEY: Yes, sir. Now, this is somewhat, Senator, misleading, because, in our adult basic education program, when we test these people to go into the manpower training program, their academic record and the test falls from two to four grades. In other words, if they show they have an eighth grade educational attainment, when they're tested out, it runs to about the fifth grade, so the educational level is much less than our academic record shows based upon the tests that we...
- CLARK: That means, as a general rule, does it not, that they cannot qualify for an MDTA project?
- McRANEY: Senator, there is the problem. The MDTA programs is geared to the eighth and ninth grade and above, and we're dealing with people far below that. And the average family...I have broken my statement down to the number of families, particularly, in these counties.
- KENNEDY: Do you have another copy of your statement or is that the only one you have?

McRANEY: No, sir. I left three or four there, Senator.

CLARK: [inaudible] Mr. McRaney's statement [inaudible].

McRANEY: And you will notice, by reading this statement, that almost half of the families in each of these counties make less than 3,000 dollars a year. The two or three points that I would like to emphasize here and the one point that I think that the poverty program or the OEO Act has been more than any other thing in that it has done this. In 1954, the Supreme Court handed down its school decision. From that time until the poverty program there was very little, if any, communication between the White and Negro leaders of Mississippi. With the passage of this act, we have been able and permitted to sit down and talk together without fear...well, some ostracism, but not too much...and this one fact alone, in my opinion, has made the poverty program worth the money that the Congress had put into it. In the Midstate board, we have 30 board members, 15 White and 15 Negro members.

CLARK: How are they appointed?

McRANEY: In the beginning, Senator, it was a group of interested White and Negro leaders got together and secured a charter. We was...Midstate was the first chartered organization in our state.

CLARK: Was Mr. Carr in on that?

McRANEY: No, sir. We operate one county removed from Mr. Carr. However, we did assist Mr. Carr, at least the board of supervisors of Coahoma County got me to write a program grant for Coahoma County in the beginning.

CLARK: Now, how did you get your job?

McRANEY: I was out of work, sir, and helped organize the program and the people was grateful and employed me in the position as Staff Director.

CLARK: What was your last working job before?

McRANEY: I had gone into the motel business in a resort type area, and it was not successful, sir.

CLARK: Are you...are you born and brought up in Mississippi?

McRANEY: Yes, sir. Lived here all my life, sir. I was, also, at one time under Governor Coleman, Director of the Mississippi Game and Fish Commission, and I know something of these problems previously. Since we have been in operations, we have received grants totaling 2,821,695 dollars. We have

more than 2,058 total employees involved in all these programs and the enrollees and Head Start children more than 8,540. We have actually, through Midstate, kept the business communities alive in these five counties. With your agricultural program that was passed two years ago that, in effect, reduced the cotton acreage by 35 per cent and your recent minimum wage law which, in my opinion, will be a blessing to Mississippi later on but not right now, we have had a tremendous number of day laborers that was out of work, and they have no means of obtaining work. And, if I may say...point this out, we've put a lot of stress here today and in the past on programs of training and jobs, but, Senator, the problem is this. These people got to live now. And there's very little industry in the five counties that I serve in, and I think we're going to have to break this program down in two ways. One, to take the younger people and keep them in NYC and, particularly, put emphasis on the in school part of NYC. Do whatever is necessary...beg, plead...to keep these kids in school, because all surveys show a person's income is directly related to the amount of education he obtains. The other part of this program is the elderly people, and we have a tremendous number of elderly people in the Delta region. So, I think what we should do is...is provide money to give these people worthwhile or meaningful occupations in the community of beautifying the streets...

CLARK: Nelson?

McRANEY: The Nelson Amendment and just give them a job that they'll be proud of and help the community without any thought of trying to get them a job later on, because [inaudible] 60 years old you're not going to be able to get them too many jobs. We might as well face it. But, still, they're human beings and they're citizens of this country, and we're too wealthy and too rich to let people in this nation go hungry.

CLARK: You've got a lot of people hungry up in that area, don't you?

McRANEY: Senator, I would put it this way. It depends on how you explain hungry. Now, I don't think we have any people who are dying, but I do think we have many people who lack the proper food.

CLARK: We've had some figures which indicate that, on a per diem caloric basis, they get somewhere around 1,500 calories a day as against 3,000 calories which is the average, I believe, in the country. Does that ring a bell with you?

McRANEY: I would think that would be near correct. And, Senator, the food stamp program has caused a lot of fear and concern on the part of the local residents in these areas. I believe that it would be wise if our government and if our public officials would still make available to these people the

surplus commodities that we have stored in the bins around over the country. Two dollars doesn't seem like a lot of money, but, if you have no money, it is a lot of money to these people. And something must be done to help them.

CLARK: We've heard a lot of testimony today about conflicts between the so-called power structure and the poor Negroes who are most anxious to get federal funds to help them operate independent programs. What can you tell us about your experience in your area with that? Is there a controversy?

McRANEY: Senator Clark, certainly there have been some controversies, but I, also, have received the support of the power structure in these five counties. I have a mayor serving on my board. I have a member...

CLARK: Well, I just assumed that you were representing the power structure. How about the other people?

McRANEY: No, sir. I believe I get more support from the poor people up there, sir. But, we have had...we haven't had the road blocks thrown in our way. We may have not had the support at all times. But we're getting more and more support now. And I have a number of letters from banks, public officials, that I'm going to mail to you in Washington that I hope can be included in the record which will show that the middle class White leaders and White business people in Mississippi recognize this need and are willing and ready and able to cooperate.

CLARK: You had mentioned Head Start. Do you have Head Start programs up there?

McRANEY: Yes, sir. We have three Head...three Head Start programs and let me say this. That program is very popular, probably the most popular program in the entire package, because it provides more employment for the underemployed and the undereducated as well as it's hard to keep little children.

CLARK: Who's...who's running it in your area?

McRANEY: It's being run by both the Negro and White communities.

CLARK: You don't have the...and I always get my initials mixed up...the MCGD? Do you have them in there?

McRANEY: No, sir, but I would say this, Senator.

CLARK: CDGM.

McRANEY: CDGM.

CLARK: And what's the other one? MAP?

McRANEY: MAP has been [inaudible]. CDGM did operate in our counties, and we worked out a cooperative agreement, Midstate with CDGM, where we took this agency over as a delegate agency. It's worked very well. We employed in Midstate Mr. Bobby James, who was the area director for CDGM. And, after we assumed the responsibility of administering the program or helping to administer, we took...employed him as the supervisor of this program, and he's done an outstanding job.

CLARK: About how many children are in your Head Start program?

McRANEY: It's...we have in the neighborhood of 1500.

CLARK: Are they mostly Negro children?

McRANEY: Yes, sir. Practically all, sir.

CLARK: And has any...has any effort been made to have integrated Head Start classes?

McRANEY: Yes, sir. We've made some effort, but we've made very little headway. The economic problem is much different. Most of your...a great number of your White people there are planters, and they don't see the need of the Head Start program as far as their children...

CLARK: And you don't have very many poor White families there who...

McRANEY: Yes, unfortunately, we do have.

CLARK: But they don't want to send their children to Head Start?

McRANEY: Well, there is some fear of ostracism and other things. And it's a very real fear, and we might as well admit it as the reason these people are not participating more.

CLARK: Well, thank you very much, sir. I don't want to cut you short. Does that about...we'll read your statement, of course. Anything else you'd care to tell us?

McRANEY: Senator, I'd like to close, if I may, with a statement that was made by former President Abraham Lincoln. And I think this would be a true situation and something that we could all...should adopt. President Lincoln once said, "I do the best I know, the very best I can, and I mean to keep right on doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is

said against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, 10 angels swearing I was right won't make no difference."

CLARK: [inaudible]

[WALES]: We'll return to the hearings in just one moment.

CLARK: Thank you very much. Mr. McClain.

McCLAIN: Senator.

CLARK: Mr. McClain.

McCLAIN: Senator, have you been given the statement? My statement?

CLARK: Yes, it'll be printed in full in the record. I'd just like you to hit the high spots.

McCLAIN: Alright, sir. Our program of Lift, Incorporated was started...

CLARK: Please give us an opportunity to hear up here. If you want to converse, please go outside.

McCLAIN: Our program was started by the business community in our area.

CLARK: Where is your area, sir?

McCLAIN: The area is Lee, Monroe and Pontotoc Counties in northeast Mississippi. It has one county with about 19 per cent Colored, one with about 35 or 40 per cent, and one with 22 per cent.

CLARK: That's a relative....relative, as I use the word, prosperous area.

McCLAIN: Lee County and Monroe County are prosperous. Pontotoc comes under a lower level of income.

CLARK: And what's the economic base? What do they grow up there? What...do they have some industry?

McCLAIN: We have industries, and we have cotton and soybeans, basically. Some [inaudible] diversified economy. Highly diversified industries.

CLARK: And tell me how you came to be the Chairman of Lift and what is Lift?

McCLAIN: Lift, incorporated, is the CAP agency which we set up in order to help direct these funds locally, and to try to help our people, White and Colored,

lift themselves, therefore, the name.

CLARK: And what were you doing, sir, before you became the...what are you...are you a businessman in that area?

McCLAIN: I have...I'm a native Mississippian, and I am publisher and executive editor of The Daily Journal and have been for 33 years.

CLARK: And what city is that published in?

McCLAIN: Tupelo, Mississippi.

CLARK: Tupelo, right. Thank you, sir.

McCLAIN: This is the area that has consistently supported the federal government, and expects to continue to do so. We have practically every program that we can find. Neighborhood Youth Corp, work experience, on-the-job training and all the others.

[WALES]: Now, just beginning his testimony, is Mr. George McClain of Tupelo, Mississippi, Chairman of Lift, Incorporated.

McCLAIN: ...Washington or Jackson or CDGM or any other damn place running our business. We assume the responsibility for it, and we're going to run it to the good of our people. So, on that basis, we have tried to keep single purpose agencies from coming in and saying, "We'll take over certain things." We try to do it with our own staff and with our own people.

CLARK: Now, did you organize the community action program in Tupelo?

McCLAIN: Yes, sir. That's what Lift is. That's all it is. It's a community action program
and Mr. McDaniel is the...

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McCLAIN: ...director. And we have lost funds in this agency as these gentlemen and other CAP agencies, because single purpose agencies have sapped up a lot of the funds which we felt, in our agency, we should [inaudible] as long as we were doing a real good job.

CLARK: Could you give us a couple of examples?

McCLAIN: On the summer Head Start from last year we had 1,020 youngsters. This year the OEO office says you cannot have any, because most of the money has gone to these other agencies. Equally, we tried to get a family planning program which we think is very vital, and they said, "No money".

CLARK: I'm interested to hear you say that, because a couple of the other witnesses indicated they do not believe the family planning program is desirable in Mississippi. I take it you disagree with that.

McCLAIN: I disagree with them very emphatically. The second point that we want to make is that the lowest 25 per cent of the really poor...I don't in our section, but throughout Mississippi...are not being adequately reached by any agency, not only the community action and CDGM and all the others, but that many of these people are not coming to the attention of these, because they don't read the papers, they don't see TV, and they're out of the mainstream of life. Their children don't go to school, and they're missing out on it. And we need to search out these people and try to give them a helping hand to lift them out of this web.

CLARK: What can you say about this annoying hunger problem that we've been hearing all afternoon in your area?

McCLAIN: I don't think there's much question there are hungry people. There are hungry people in Chicago and in Boston and in New York City and in Los Angeles. And I am certainly sure that there are some in Mississippi. And I agree with what most of the people have said that the stamps have hurt many people who did not have the two to 10 dollars to buy groceries. But I feel that we need three or four things very badly, and they've got to work in coordination or cooperation to get them, and I want to list those very briefly. It's essential...and we all agree with this...that we give our people basic education. We have more functionally illiterate people in our state, probably, than in any other state, and we must give them this basic education. But, equally, we must give them the vocational and technical training that they need to hold down jobs in modern industry, not discounting the Nelson Amendments and the other things that Rex has mentioned here.

CLARK: Where are you going to find the jobs for them, Mr. McClain?

McCLAIN: I'm going to tell you how to do that.

CLARK: Good.

McCLAIN: Our feeling is that people constitute America's basic resource. Not

programs, not buildings, not a lot of hot air, but providing the things that will develop people where they are. One of the basic things is that breadwinners in poverty families cannot afford to stop work and go to school even though they're only part-time employees. These programs, such as work experience, manpower development and training, and on the job training programs, do provide some money while they are learning. We, for example, even though OEO didn't particularly like it, we require our young neighborhood youth corps to work three days a week so they can have some income, one day in basic education, and one day in vocational education. And they are better off than they have ever been, and we are moving people out of these programs into jobs.

CLARK: Well, I take it that, in your particular area where you have some industry, it is possible to find industrial jobs for some of these people. Is that correct?

McCLAIN: Yes, sir. And, if some of these people in other parts of Mississippi would [stir] themselves, we could get more industry. We think the federal government is wise to keep...help us keep our poorest people in the rural areas, for we believe we can do more to bring them into the mainstream of community life than can possibly be done in a metropolitan area. A second thing, in addition to education, is houses. And I hope you all see some of the housing in the Delta. If you were up in my section I could show you some that would turn your hair. It's terrible, and I'm not blaming the people who don't have need for the houses, the plantation owners and so forth. That's not the point. But it's not fit for human habitation in many cases, and there's no place to turn. And we need to do more through the Farm Home Administration, special grants, rent subsidies, and so forth, because it's an amazing thing that happens to a person when you get them out of a substandard house into decent housing. Something happens inside to them.

CLARK: I'm surprised we haven't had more emphasis on that today. I think you're the first witness who's made a point of it.

McCLAIN: The next thing is family planning. It is imperative that we use modern medical knowledge to help the poor help themselves. How can any intelligent person, any, expect an uneducated, unskilled person to decently feed, clothe and educate 10 or 12 children?

CLARK: Now, let me ask you at that point, whether you don't have a good many families in your area who are pretty much without any visible means of support who do have six, eight, 10 children?

McCLAIN: And that is an extremely difficult situation.

CLARK: But they do have them, don't they?

McCLAIN: They do have them, and you're not going to eliminate reproduction. You just as well try to [inaudible].

CLARK: Well, now, earlier...I'm interested in this because to let the cat out of the bag, I strongly agree with you.

McCLAIN: Thank you.

CLARK: And, therefore, I was somewhat startled to hear Dr. Britton testify this morning. He's a physician. He's the chairman of the Mississippi State Advisory Board...

McCLAIN: I heard him, and I almost fell out of my chair.

CLARK: Yeah, well, you heard him. You want to comment on his view?

McCLAIN: I disagree with him diametrically. And, while I think he is correct in saying we need jobs, we need jobs and birth control and housing and education. He's not going to do it with any one of these, and I'm a teacher from back 35 years ago, I used to teach. And I don't think you're going to do it unless you can get this fellow out of the classroom and put him on a job where he can make a decent living. [inaudible] fits together.

CLARK: All over the world, in my judgment, there is a race between starvation and population increase.

McCLAIN: That's correct.

CLARK: And I would be surprised if Mississippi was an exception.

McCLAIN: Well, the majority of the middle income people in America practice birth control. And they have the money, the know-how and the medical advice necessary to take precautions. And we need to make it available to them. I'm not saying mandatory. That's not even in my...the back of my mind. But I think this is a must if we are going to prevent this.

CLARK: To me, the moral issue is very clear. No woman should be required to have a child she doesn't want. The unwanted child is [something] we try to protect against. I'm propagandizing here...

McCLAIN: My board of directors of Lift thoroughly agrees with what you and I are talking about here.

CLARK: Well, that's good.

McCLAIN: We think it should be done. I agree, and one of the few statements of the

young lady that talked at such length. We hope that the 10 per cent [formula] can be carried on for another year. In some areas, [inaudible] will go beyond this percentage. Now, then, let me make the point about how we have tried to [inaudible] in our area. Provide jobs. I've seen this thing coming on a long time. I was a sociology teacher at one time, and I went into the newspaper business. And, as people are going off of the farm, they've either got to migrate somewhere and cause problems in cities, or we've got to educate them, develop them and employ them locally. And, therefore, my little town of approximately 20,000 has, for many years, put up from 50 to 100,000 dollars a year to attract jobs. And, during the last year or two, we have increased in these three counties 1,500 jobs. Half of them would not have got those jobs had it not been for these programs which we've got through the goodness of the federal government. Therefore, I say thank God that we've got the federal government to help us, because we haven't the means to do it ourselves.

CLARK: Can you give us a very rough idea of what kind of jobs you were able to create?

McCLAIN: Every job that we can possible think about. Our biggest employer is in the needlecraft and related trades. We, also, have many furniture factories with all the sources of supply that feed into that industry. We have [tire] plants. We have power tools. We have electric lighting. We have a highly diversified group of industry. And, within the last 17 years, our area has added approximately 18,000 new industrial jobs for the people in our seven county area. My county, which is a county of 45,000 at the present time, Lee County, in 1950 had 2,100 jobs. Today, we have over 8,000 industrial jobs. And nobody did it for us. Our people did it for themselves. There isn't any Uncle Sam...any Santa Claus in Washington or Jackson, Mississippi, or even in Tupelo. We've all got to work together and pool our resources and cooperate and do this job for ourselves. It can be done, Mr. Chairman.

CLARK: Thank you very much for a most fascinating statement. Does your executive director wish to add anything?

McDANIEL: No.

CLARK: Senator Murphy.

MURPHY: I have no questions. I'd like to congratulate you. You seem to take a very down-to-earth, practical approach to this matter. You, also, in your town, seemed to have had the good sense to anticipate the problem before it arrived. And one of the things that...if I may say, and this is off the record, please...one of the shocking experiences to me since I have come into the United States Senate is to find out that, after all the years that so many people in Washington have been working so hard in so many different

programs, so little really has been accomplished. It's shocking, and I don't...I don't know how to tell you how pleased I am to hear your experience much have accomplished as an example of what can be done where people have the will to do it, and just give them the proper leadership and they'll go to work to do it. Thank you very much, sir.

CLARK: Mr. McClain...and I'd like, also, Mr. McRaney and Mr. Roblin to think about this a little...as a senator from Pennsylvania, I'm actually interested in and familiar with the Appalachian Program which takes in about two-thirds of my state and runs on down the Appalachian Mountain chain and takes in some of the southern states, but not Mississippi. I'm wondering whether it might not be worth thinking about either to see if the Appalachian Program could be amended so as to take in at least the Delta area and possibly even Tupelo and other parts of Mississippi.

McCLAIN: My friend, we would like to give you...we would like to just congratulate you on that, and you're going to have an opportunity to vote to bring in 18 counties in northeast Mississippi very shortly.

CLARK: Well, I'm glad to hear you say that, but let me ask you this, because some of our pe...our staff people have suggested it would be better to form a new Delta regional commission like the Appalachian commission which would cover parts of Mississippi, Arkansas, and Louisiana, or do you think it would be better to hook it on to Appalachia?

McCLAIN: I think since these 18 counties, or 25 counties...whatever you wind up with...are actually a part of the Appalachian area...it's contiguous to Alabama, Tennessee and so forth...I think that should go ahead with the Appalachian program. But, by all means, due to the very real problems of the Mississippi Delta, there should be a program similar to the Ozark program which would embody the Delta region of Arkansas, south Arkansas, the Mississippi and the upper Louisiana area.

MURPHY: May I ask a question?

McCLAIN: Should move out on this overall development of people where they are making a contribution to America.

CLARK: Senator Murphy.

MURPHY: I'd like to ask a question. Are you familiar with the progress and what has happened to the Appalachian program?

McCLAIN: Yes, sir. We had the...some of the head staff people in our town just about 10 days ago, and they gave us a report on it. These things, as so many of them, are slow getting cranked off. The only thing I feel about most of these

programs is they do too much in terms of physical things and too little in terms of people. And, in my estimate, people are basic. Their needs, their development is more fundamental than, for example...

MURPHY: The reason I asked that is because we're still holding hearings to find out whether the Appalachian program has turned into anything besides what it originally was...was a road building program. Now, is that...would that be helpful to you in your particular situation?

McCLAIN: It would be extremely helpful to us, because we have been completely left off of the interstate system, and our roads are 30 to 40 years old and they're hardly passable without great danger.

MURPHY: I should have known better than to ask anybody smart enough to have the testimony you have would've been smart enough to know all about Appalachia. Thank you very much.

CLARK: I wonder if Mr. McRaney or Mr. Roblin would like to add anything about this possibility of Appalachia or the alternative of the Delta [basin]?

McRANEY: Yes, sir, Senator. I think that the Delta should be comprised of a unit within itself, because of the population characteristic and, also, the educational attainment, and the Mississippi Delta, the Arkansas and Louisiana Delta are practically a economic unit. All income, basically, around cotton and soybeans. So I believe the problem could be handled better if we had a Delta...because of what it was called...if it would encompass the counties situated in the Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas Delta. And, Senator Clark, if I may, I would like to make one more suggestion. The Congress has been very generous in enacting legislation that has its purpose in helping people. But in this legislation...and I'm particularly referring to the legislation pertaining to the Farmers Home Administration and the Federal Housing Authority and these other agencies that deal with the housing program and I comment on this in my statement...there's a sentence in there that the applicant must have a reasonable probability of repayment. Now, many of these people could pay this money back, but it gives the administrators of these agencies a loophole in which they really go out, and we're not reaching the extreme element of people who need this help. Most of the help that's coming through these federal agencies...and it's good help...stops with your lower middle class group, and we've got to find some way to eliminate this sentence where these people can get help. The house will still be there whether the first individual pays for it or not...

[Break in tape]

McRANEY: ...pay for the house and it will help the countryside. So, if we could

eliminate that sentence, a reasonable expectation of repayment, I believe we could make some progress in the Delta in the housing.

CLARK: Mr. Roblin, do you care to add anything?

ROBLIN: Mr. Chairman, of course, our area is not involved in the Delta. I have been in the...where you're going tomorrow...the Coahoma area several times, and I would agree with what Mr. McRaney and Mr. McClain said that the Delta area is in dire need of a...of a Delta type thing. There is one further thing I would like to add if I may. There were several things mentioned since the beginning this morning...and I've been here, as you have, since the beginning...that caught my ear which I didn't particularly agree with. But there's...we got started this morning on a statewide single purpose agency and, at differing points and testimonies down through the day, we've gone over them and we've talked about them. We've talked about power structure and the poor people and so forth, and I think that all of the community action people that I know in this state would certainly agree that the poor, themselves, must be involved in the decision-making in all areas of the agency. But I think, too, they would also agree that the power structural...power structure must be involved, too I would, because we're talking about a process which is creating social change. And no social change is going to occur unless there's a socialization or educational process within the middle class. And you're not going to get this unless you involve these people from the beginning. Again, in reference to the statewide organization, I think that these organizations that have existed in Mississippi, all of them have done some good, some more than others and so forth. But there's one area that I think that has been completely overlooked in this hearing. And that is the fact that Congress has put a definite limitation on the number of community action agencies in the country, and it's my information that the Office of Economic Opportunity has already gone over this number. I don't know whether Congress made this rule, but someone in OEO made the rule that existing community action agencies could not expand geographically.

MURPHY: May I interrupt for a moment? As far as I know, I don't know of any restriction put out by the Congress...

ROBLIN: Pardon me, it was...it was by the Bureau of Budget. Yes, that was my mistake.

CLARK: ...executive order.

ROBLIN: That's right.

MURPHY: I might say...I might say one other thing. That, last year, that the Senate

voted the funds in exactly the amount that the administration asked for. Not as much as the chairman of the subcommittee asked for, but as much as the administration asked for. Now, those funds were cut and in proportion of the amount I don't think to any tremendous degree. And I'm amazed going from place to place to find that this program has to be discontinued, that one has to be discontinued, and I'm going to, [inaudible] time, see if I can't gather together figures and find out what has happened to...I've forgotten, what was the final count?...a billion...

CLARK: It was a billion, six hundred and twenty million, I think. What happened, Senator, I think was fairly clear. A billion, seven hundred and fifty million was authorized by the two houses of Congress. In the Labor Committee, we tried to get two billion five, and the Senate chopped us up. The House went along with the administration figure. Then the Appropriations Committee, of which Senator Stennis was talking this morning, cut the authorization by a hundred thirty-seven million, five hundred thousand. But the one billion, seven hundred and fifty was hardly enough to keep the existing programs going at the rate they had arrived at at the end of the previous fiscal year which meant that everything had to be cut back. Then you throw a hundred thirty-seven million, five on top of that. It's clear to me, Senator, that that's what's happened.

MURPHY: I hear...I hear of so many programs that have to be knocked out going into it and many [inaudible] at the job training camps. We were told that the cost was very high 'cause they were just [cranking] up getting the production line. I assumed that that cost would be dropped. Apparently it wasn't. Apparently the cost is just as high. So these are the problems. Today, several people have talked about doing away with the program. I don't know of anybody on this subcommittee that has any intention of doing away with the program. Our purpose is merely to find out what's been going on and has it been properly handled, has it been properly administered and is it doing the job? We've found, for instance with the job training corps, that we got a figure...a gross figure...of the number of people that have gone through, but some had only been there a day, some a week, some two weeks. So, to this minute, I don't know, actually, what the cost per man in the job training corps from the beginning to graduation. We [begged] last year to find out what happened to him six months after he graduated, a year after, eighteen months...so we'd have some follow-up on him to know whether we were accomplishing the job. So I only recite these so that you gentlemen will have clear understanding of our problem and our purpose for being here. I know nobody who wants to cut this program out, and I, also, think that the more we can say there are programs that are definitely working or definitely creating a definite accomplishment, it puts us in the best position to have a better chance with the appropriations committee.

ROBLIN: I...I...I think this is all true, Senator, but the point that I was trying to make here...and I didn't go into sufficient detail...is that Mississippi seems to have a unique problem in the fact, number one, is a number of people in Washington have attempted to adopt Mississippi and have presented the state with their specific solutions for the problems. And Mr. McClain touched on this a few moments ago when we were talking about statewide single purpose agencies, and the regional office in Atlanta has been bypassed in most instances and when community action agencies which, as I understand, the act are supposed to be the hub around which these programs operate were told by OEO there was no more funds available, then there's a three or four million dollar grant announced coming again to the state of Mississippi through another agency. And there seems there has been a great deal of inconsistency along this line. And, when we are told from OEO in Washington that you cannot expand geographically or there are no more funds for new community action agencies, then you find the situation in Mississippi...and this is not unique...that, in many counties in this state, there is more going on than there is in counties that do not have community action agencies than there are counties that do. And this is not necessarily the fault of the community action agency.

CLARK: Your quite right, but I can explain that. And I think, because there's so many interested people in the press, I shall explain it. What happened was that, in the course of the bill going through the Congress, there were a number of new programs introduced at the request of various senators and congressmen. Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts got a health program in there for health centers. Senator Javits and Senator Robert Kennedy had an economic impact program which was supposed to bring business into the ghetto areas in the larger cities. Senator Nelson had his program. Congressmen [Shoite] had his program. Then we get the bill over in the House, and we find Head Start is popular. And NYC is popular. And, so, the House insists on earmarking funds for each of those programs outside of CAP. And we fought...I was the chairman of the Conference Committee in the Senate...I fought as hard as I could, but, in the end, they insisted on earmarking. And where are you going to take it? The only place you can take it is out of community action. That's where it took. And I think, myself, it was terrible, but that's what happened. So, the OEO is quite correct when it tells you they haven't got any money for CAP. That's why.

ROBLIN: Yes, I understand this, and I realize...

MURPHY: I want to say, the [inaudible] senator was so upset, I refused to sign the report.

CLARK: Yes, you were very difficult, George. Gentlemen, thank you very much for your helpful testimony. That concludes our witnesses for today. I would like to make a very brief closing statement. In the first place, I would like to

thank all of the witnesses who have given so unsparingly of their time and their efforts here today, and to tell you how very much every member of this subcommittee appreciates your cooperation, your careful thought and your willingness to speak extremely candidly. I'd, also, like to thank the audience, because the audience has behaved in the best American tradition. You've let your enthusiasm run over hardly ever at all. You've behaved in the most mature and fine way, and we're very proud on the subcommittee of the citizens of Mississippi who came here to attend these hearings. I'd like to thank my good friend, Allen Thompson, the Mayor of Jackson. He used to be the Mayor of Jackson when I was the Mayor of Philadelphia, and we've been friends for a great many years, and it was a great privilege for me to come into the Allen Thompson Airport yesterday. And I want to thank him for the hospitality which [inaudible] to the subcommittee. Now, tomorrow, we're going to go out and try to see visually instead of getting it by ear. We're going to try to see for ourselves a number of these problems in the Delta area which we heard discussed today. And, when we've seen those problems tomorrow, on the basis of what we do see and what we've heard here today, we will take back to Washington the full facts which we have had developed by you fine witnesses here today. And you can rest assured that we will go right to the top with what we've found, particularly with respect to this problem of hunger and the need, really, for a distress program to keep people in good health and from starving. We'll go right to the White House with this to the extent that we have to. And I want to thank all of you for bringing these to our attention, and the hearing is now adjourned.

[WALES]:

So that concludes the hearings to be held here in Jackson by this special Senate subcommittee looking into federal antipoverty programs. Of course, this is the first of a series to be held in ten states here in the nation. As you know, they will travel from here up through the Delta to Memphis tomorrow. If you're wondering why only Senator Murphy and Senator Clark were left on the rostrum up here at the close, I might tell you that Senator Javits has flown back to New York where he is to make a speech tonight. He is to return, or attempt to return, and meet them in the Delta tomorrow. Senator Kennedy has gone out to Tougaloo College to make a talk to the student body there. That concludes the activities here in the Olympic Room of the Heidelberg Hotel. This is Dallas [Wales] returning you now to our studios.

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